

## MUSIC

# Abilene youngsters enjoyed Joe McDermott performance



Thomas Metthe/Reporter-News Kids dance along as Joe McDermott performs during the Young Audiences show on Tuesday at the Abilene Public Library.

By *Janet Van Vleet* of the Abilene Reporter News

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If the dozens of children seated on the floor of the downtown public library auditorium on Tuesday morning were any indication, singer Joe McDermott is a star.

McDermott is the first of four performers in the Young Audiences of Abilene and the Abilene Public Library Summer 2016 Shows.

The Austin musician/songwriter had the youngsters jumping up and down, riding motorcycles, pigs and porcupines and laughing at his jokes.

He played two free shows at the downtown branch of the library. His lyrics and snappy music kept the kids fully engaged. A key factor in any show for children is audience participation. With all the ups and downs and jumping the children did, the little ones probably took naps later without a fuss.

When McDermott launched into "Ride, Ride, Ride," he asked his audience to show him how to ride a horse and the children happily demonstrated their equestrian skills.

Then, when "the sun went down," he instructed them to lie down and sleep and snore. Comical snorts filled the air.

McDermott proceeded to have them ride motorcycles, pogo sticks, a pig and a porcupine.

During one quiet moment, a baby's cries filled the room.

"My motto is 'Joe McDermott is not for everybody,'" the singer said, drawing laughs from the adults in the room.

But the wildest song was yet to come.

McDermott's "Roller Coaster" song took the youngsters on a small roller coaster, then it was on to a much bigger, higher, faster roller coaster. He used his guitar to create the anticipation of the climb up the first hill. Once there, McDermott told the kids to tip forward and "scream as loud as you can."

It's amazing how loud children can scream, especially inside a quiet library room that suddenly seemed very small.

One of the funniest moments came when McDermott was telling the story about the "Stand Up/Sit Down" song. He said a guy came up to him after the song and said it would be more fun faster.

"You don't know children like I know children," McDermott said he

told the man. "They can't do it that fast."

One little girl in the front row piped up.

"I can!" she said.

McDermott chuckled and asked her if she could come with him to all his shows.

The children had a great time and McDermott's humor kept the adults smiling. All in all, a successful Young Audiences performance.

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**About Janet Van Vleet**

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